Amendments to Claims

Please cancel claims 1-16.

Please amend claims 17-24 as follows:

~~17.~~1. (Currently Amended) An automotive pile surface structure, comprising:

a backing substrate comprising a thermoplastic sound absorbing sheet having a density of at least 1.0 g/cc and a thickness of at least 0.4 mm (15 mils);

an adhesive surface on one surface of said substrate;

a fabric stabilizing layer on the surface of said backing opposing said adhesive surface;

a plurality of pile articles, each comprising a support strand having bonded thereto a pile yarn comprising filaments of thermoplastic polymer, said yarn having a dense portion of filaments bonded together and secured to the surface of the support strand at a base by fusion of the thermoplastic polymer of the support strand and the filaments;

the pile articles placed one next to the other and said base bonded to the adhesive surface of said backing substrate with the tufts extending away from the backing;

said base surface of the elongated pile article embedded below the adhesive surface of said backing substrate so that said adhesive surface engages pile yarns beyond said base surface.

~~18.~~ 2. (Currently Amended) The pile surface structure of claim ~~17~~ 1 wherein said adhesive surface comprises spaced apart adhesive ribbons aligned with the base surface of each of said elongated pile articles.

~~19.~~3. (Currently Amended) In a tuftstring carpet assembly comprising a backing substrate and a pile article attached thereto, with each pile article comprising a support strand having attached thereto a plurality of pile forming yarns comprising multifilaments, the yarns at the point of attachment to the strand being attached to the backing substrate and the pile forming filaments arranged to create a pile surface spaced from the backing substrate, the improvement comprising:

a monofilament yarn blended with the multifilament yarn and attached to said support strand to create stiff bristle filaments distributed in the pile surface.

~~20.~~4. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a pile surface article preform, comprising the steps of:

a) arranging a pile article to substantially cover a backing substrate, said pile article comprising a strand having attached thereto opposed rows of loosely entangled pile filaments, the rows spaced apart making the strand accessible and the rows connected to each other and to the strand at a base;

b) applying pressure to said strand between said rows to press said pile article against said backing substrate, and

c) embedding the base of said pile article into said backing and causing said rows to rotate toward one another to reduce said space between the rows on the pile article.

~~21.~~5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~20~~4, further comprising the step of:

d) applying heat to said pile filaments thereby bulking said filaments and substantially eliminating said space between rows.

~~22.~~6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~20~~ 4 wherein said applying step b) comprises:

urging an ultrasonic horn against said pile article, and the method further comprising the step of:

applying ultrasonic energy to the horn to heat the interface between said pile article and said backing.

~~23.~~7. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a pile surface article preform, comprising the steps of:

a) holding a backing substrate on a cylindrical drum by applying a vacuum to the side of the backing contacting said drum;

b) winding a pile article, comprising a strand and pile yarn attached at a base region of the pile article, spirally over the surface of the backing substrate so the pile yarn of the pile article substantially covers the backing substrate and;

c) pressing the pile article strand against the backing substrate to embed the pile article base region in the backing to a depth of 0.13-0.64 mm (5-25 mils).

~~24.~~8. (Currently Amended) In a method of forming a pile article by guiding support strands along guiding grooves on ridges positioned at the corners of a multi-sided mandrel, wrapping a pile yarn around the mandrel over the ridges and the strands guided thereon to form loops of yarn, transporting the loops and strands under a bonding means aligned with the support strands and bonding the yarn to the strands, the improvement comprising the steps of:

a) providing additional guiding grooves on each side of the mandrel between the ridges on the mandrel and guiding additional support strands in the additional grooves;

b) bonding the yarn to the strands guided at the corners of the mandrel so that the corner strands positively transport the yarn attached thereto;

c) bonding the yarn to the strands guided on the sides of the mandrel after said bonding at the corners to attach the additional strands to the yarn; and

d) cutting said loop of yarn between the support strands to form a plurality of pile articles and forwarding the pile articles off the mandrel.